

# AKIRA

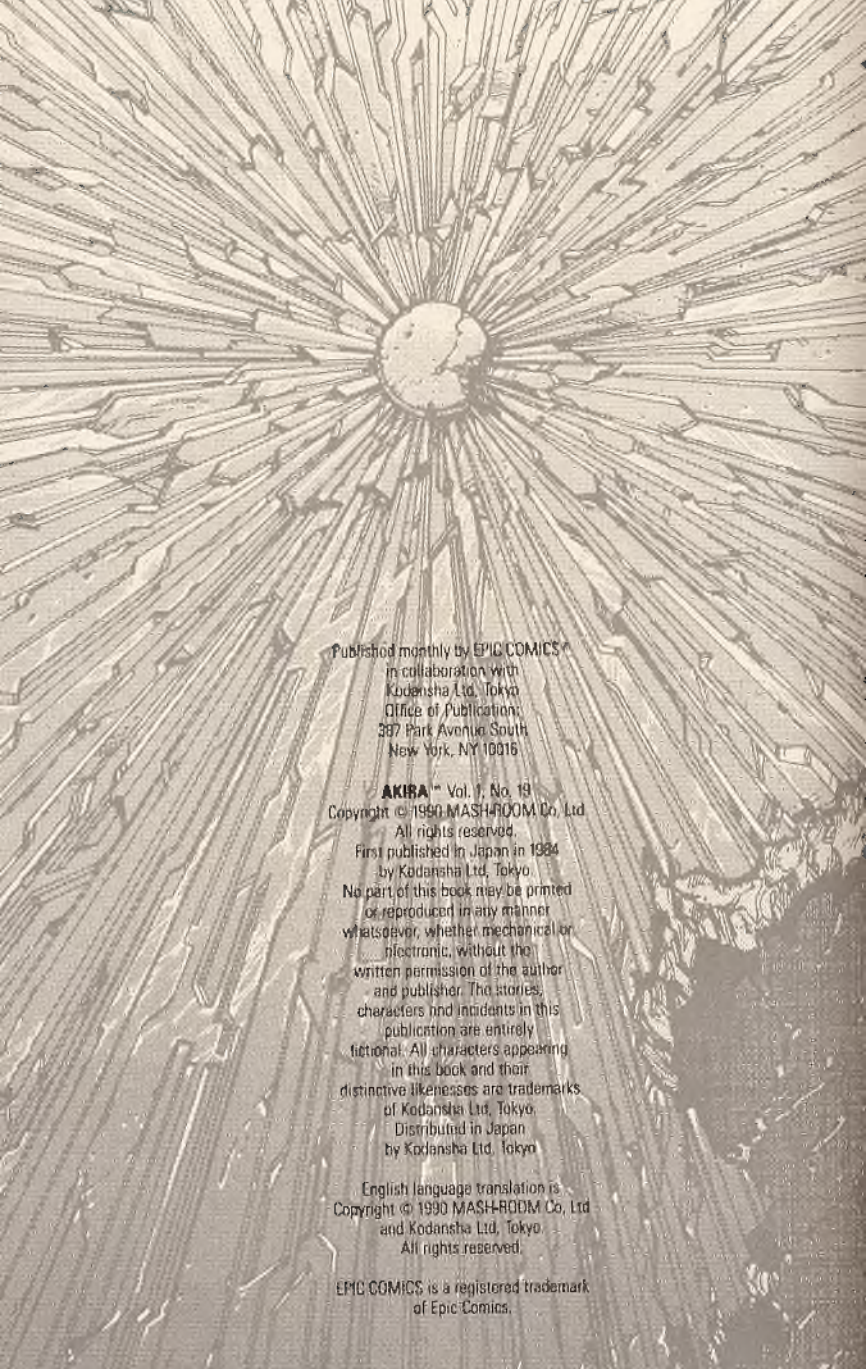
19



EPIC COMICS • \$3.95 • \$4.95 CAN • VOL. 1, NO. 19



KATSUHIRO OTOMO

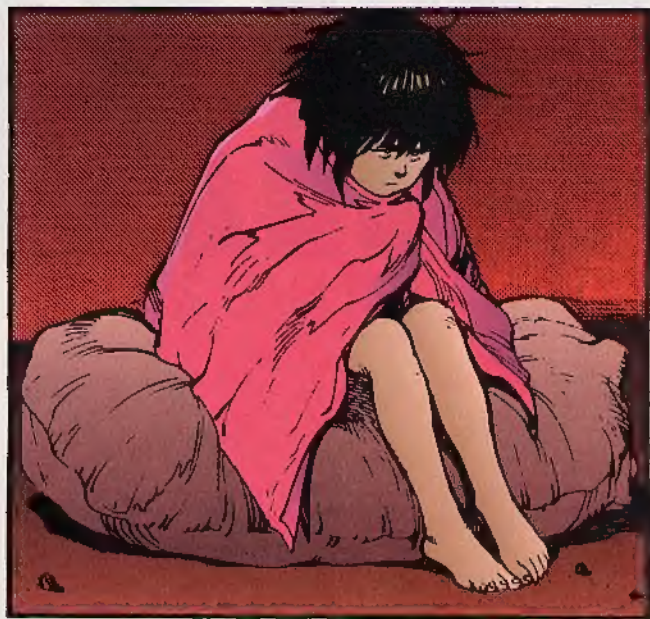


Published monthly by EPIC COMICS®  
in collaboration with  
Kodansha Ltd., Tokyo  
Office of Publication:  
387 Park Avenue South  
New York, NY 10016

**AKIRA™** Vol. 1, No. 19  
Copyright © 1990 MASH-ROOM Co., Ltd.  
All rights reserved.  
First published in Japan in 1984  
by Kodansha Ltd., Tokyo.  
No part of this book may be printed  
or reproduced in any manner  
whatsoever, whether mechanical or  
electronic, without the  
written permission of the author  
and publisher. The stories,  
characters and incidents in this  
publication are entirely  
fictional. All characters appearing  
in this book and their  
distinctive likenesses are trademarks  
of Kodansha Ltd., Tokyo.  
Distributed in Japan  
by Kodansha Ltd., Tokyo

English language translation is  
Copyright © 1990 MASH-ROOM Co., Ltd.  
and Kodansha Ltd., Tokyo.  
All rights reserved.

EPIC COMICS is a registered trademark  
of Epic Comics.



TO SAVE THE CHILDREN



# AKIRA

BY KATSUHIRO OTOMO

Chapter 19

## TO SAVE THE CHILDREN

## WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

**T**wenty-thirty. The world stands poised at the edge of World War IV. An explosion of thermo-nuclear proportions has been set off in **Neo-Tokyo**. The world, particularly the superpowers, wonders what has happened. In **Neo-Tokyo**, in a section known as the "old city", a band of teenaged delinquents led by **Kaneda** encounters **Number 26**, a child named **Takashi** who used extraordinary telekinetic abilities to injure **Tetsuo**, one of Kaneda's close friends.

As a result, **Kaneda** and **Tetsuo** become entangled in a power struggle between a mysterious military and scientific organization led by the **Colonel** and an underground resistance group bent on putting a stop to the **Colonel's** activities.

Among the resistance, **Kaneda** meets **Kay**—a girl he alternately maddens and tries to seduce—Kay's "brother" **Ryu**, and a formidable woman named **Chiyoko**. Other important resistance leaders include Ryu's superior—the opposition leader **Nezu**—and

a powerful religious with precognitive gifts, **Lady Miyako**.

The **Colonel** has a number of psychic children like **Number 26** under his control. Each child possesses a distinct set of psychic talents and is identified by a number marked on the hand. At one time **Lady Miyako** was **Number 19** in this series. **Number 28** is **Akira**, so powerful that since the war he has been suspended in cryogenic sleep.

The **Colonel's** staff conducts experiments which awaken tremendous telepathic potential in **Tetsuo**, who is redubbed **Number 41**. Able to shrug off the most serious injuries, **Tetsuo** goes on a killing spree, murdering one of Kaneda's friends and even attacking **Kaneda**. Then, followed by **Kay** and **Kaneda**, **Tetsuo** sets out in search of **Akira**, whose powers he thinks may rival his own.

Even in hibernation, **Akira's** power responds to **Tetsuo's** psychic energy. When **Tetsuo** reaches **Akira's** resting place, the cryogenic chamber cracks from within and **Akira**—dazed and docile following his long sleep—emerges.

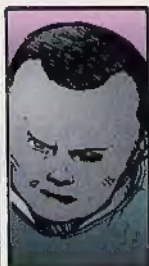
Terrified of what may occur, the **Colonel** summons the powerful SOL military satellite



Chiyoko



Kaori



Lt. Yamada



Tetsuo



and orders that its laser cannon be fired at **Tetsuo** and **Akira**, who are separated by the blasts. **Akira** is saved by **Kay** and **Kaneda**, but **Tetsuo** is less fortunate. The laser strikes his left arm.

**Neo-Tokyo** is placed in a state of military emergency following the disaster. "Caretaker robots" patrol the streets, dealing harshly with looters and restoring order. The **Colonel** uses the emergency as an excuse to hunt down and destroy his enemies. With the aid of his inner circle, the **Colonel** stages a successful coup d'état.

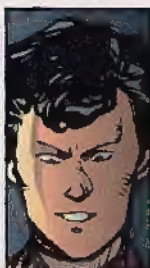
**Nezu**, planning to exploit **Akira** for his own purposes, kidnaps the child and orders his staff to kill **Kaneda**, **Kay**, and **Chiyoko**, who manage to escape and free **Akira**. He is, however, stolen from them again, this time by young psychics headed by **Sakaki** and

trained by **Lady Miyako**, who now knows that **Nezu** has betrayed her. The **Colonel**, with his troops and his psychic children, is also frantically trying to find **Akira** before he fully awakens. **Sakaki** hides **Akira** in a dumpster. There he is found by **Ryu**—one of the few people who doesn't recognize the child. **Ryu** and **Akira** encounter **Nezu**, who blurts out the boy's name. **Ryu** realizes that his former master is a traitor. When **Nezu** tries to kill them, **Ryu** guns him down and leaves him for dead.

Ultimately, **Sakaki**, **Ryu**, **Akira**, **Kaneda**, **Kay** and **Chiyoko** are surrounded by the **Colonel's** troops. **Sakaki** is killed trying to escape, but all seems well when **Takashi** fondly greets **Akira** and reintroduces him to their fellow psychics **Kiyoko** and **Masaru**. Then **Nezu**, dying and determined for revenge, arrives and tries to kill



**Akira**



**Tetsuo's Aide**



**Ryu**



**Masaru**

**Akira**, killing **Takashi** instead.

The trauma of **Takashi's** death galvanizes **Akira**, who fully awakens and unleashes a light blast powerful enough to devastate the entire city. Acting quickly, **Masaru** and **Kiyoko** sweep most of the people in the area upward, into the shelter of a skyscraper. **Kaneda** is last seen vanishing toward the sky. In the wake of the disaster, **Lady Miyako** opens her temple and offers shelter and comfort to those in need.

Afterwards, as **Akira** sits alone, telekinetically playing with bits of rubble, **Tetsuo** finally reappears. **Neo-Tokyo** is completely cut off from the rest of the outside world, and in the western part of the city the **Great Tokyo Empire** is formed—a monarchy with **Akira** on the throne and **Tetsuo** as his prime minister. Together the pair use their powers, healing the sick, wielding control of the faithful, and organizing their subjects into fighting units that destroy caretaker robots and conquer military and medical relief parties sent from the outside world. In addition, **Tetsuo** conducts deadly tests on special followers, hoping to find more psychics fit for training. The **Empire** is eventually infiltrated by teams of spies sent from the outside to learn what is

happening inside the city.

**Masaru** and **Kiyoko** are sick with withdrawal from the drug which augments and channels their psychic powers, and **Kiyoko** tells **Kay** to find **Number 19**. They meet with **Lady Miyako**, who gives them medicine to help **Kiyoko** and **Masaru**, and asks that **Kay** bring the other psychics to her when they are well.

Most of the spies from the outside are hunted down by a clairvoyant, and killed by other chemically created psychics. Only their leader, **Lt. Yamada**, kills one of the monsters and escapes. **Tetsuo's** followers are on the verge of catching him again, when **Ryu**—who has been depressed and drinking heavily following the recent deaths of many of his friends in the resistance—appears and leads him into the safety of an underground shelter.

Meanwhile, **Tetsuo's** aide picks three pretty girls out of the **Empire's** breadline for what he thinks will be a fatal orgy. **Tetsuo** orders them to swallow diluted, recreational strength capsules of the mind-altering drugs. As the orgy begins, so does an odyssey into **Tetsuo's** mind, and he relives his past, recalling moments of his friendship with the cocky, maddening **Kaneda**.



The Colonel



Kiyoko

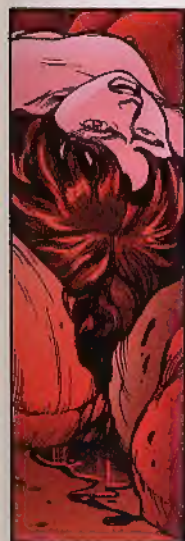
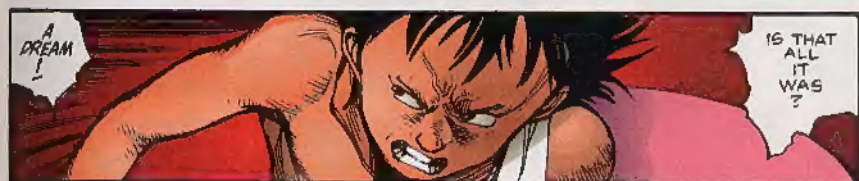


Seer

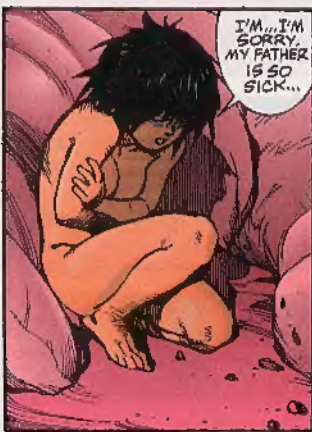


Kay









IT WAS  
YOUR  
DOING,  
WASN'T  
IT,  
AKIRA?

THEY SAID  
OUR POWERS  
RESPOND TO  
EACH OTHER...  
I MUST HAVE  
SYNCHRONIZED  
WITH YOU BY  
ACCIDENT.

PAD

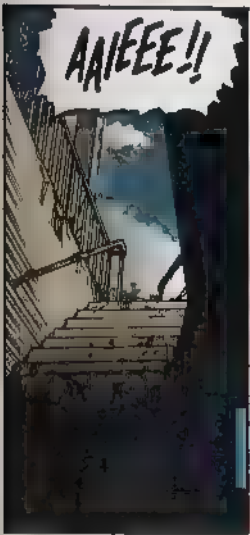
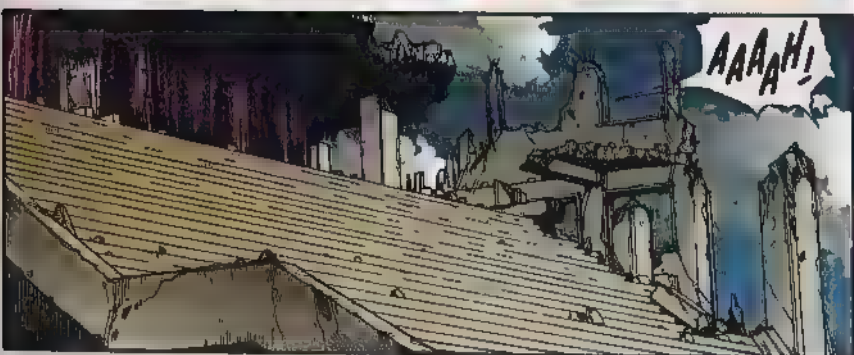
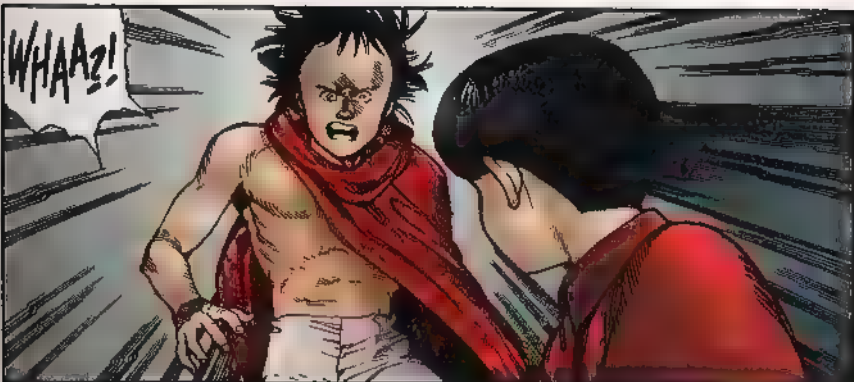
SCARED  
THE SHIT OUT  
ME.

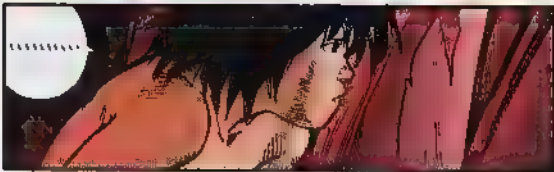
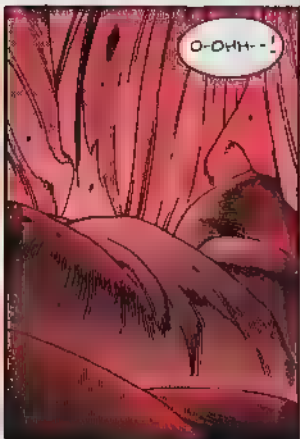
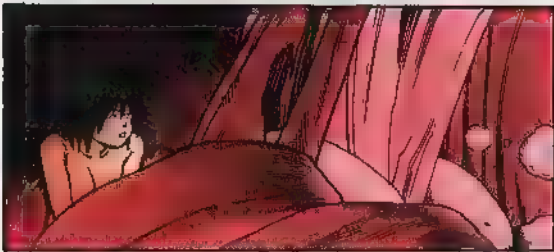
BUT WHAT MADE  
IT HAPPEN NOW,  
WHEN IT NEVER HAS  
BEFORE?

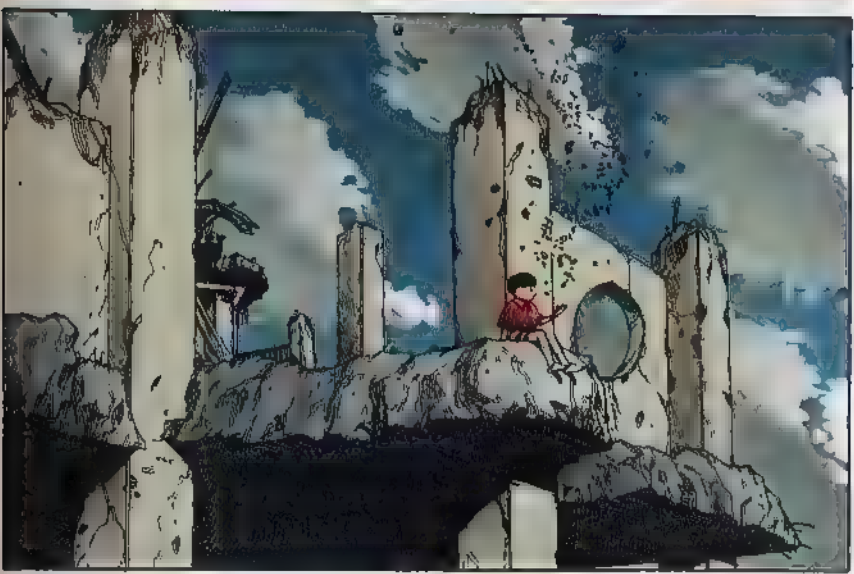
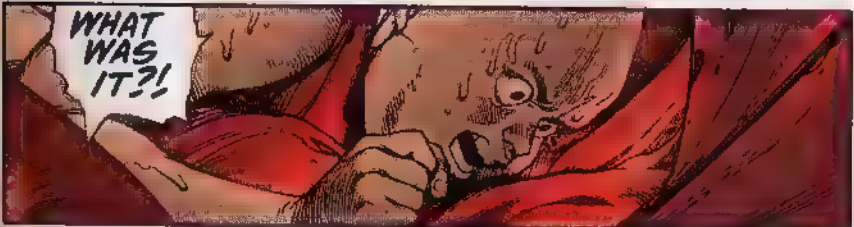
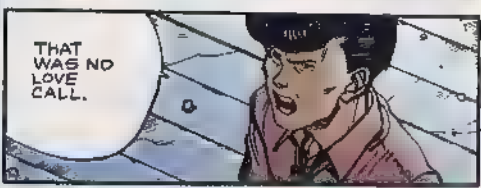
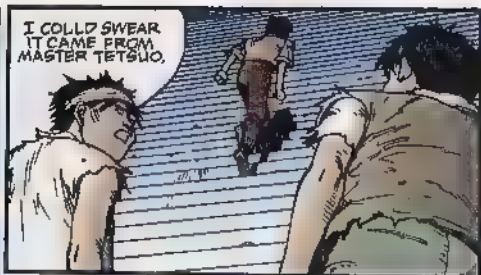
THIS TIME  
I SAW FOR  
MYSELF  
WHAT'S  
GOING ON  
IN THAT  
HEAD  
OF  
YOURS.



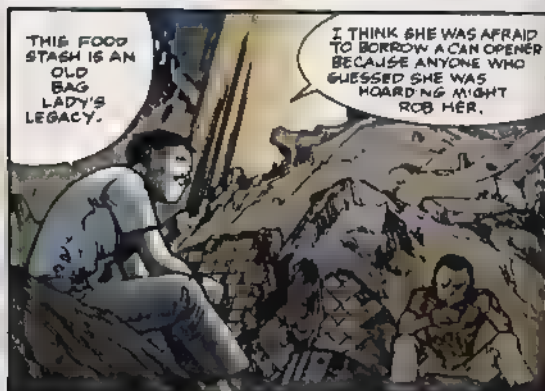






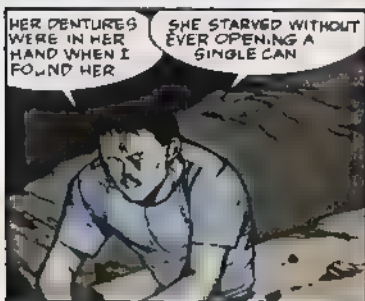






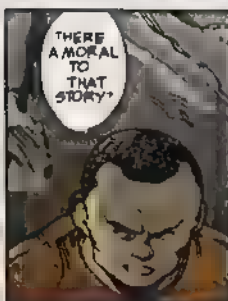
THIS FOOD STASH IS AN OLD BAG LADY'S LEGACY.

I THINK SHE WAS AFRAID TO BORROW A CAN OPENER BECAUSE ANYONE WHO GUESSED SHE WAS HOARDING MIGHT ROB HER.

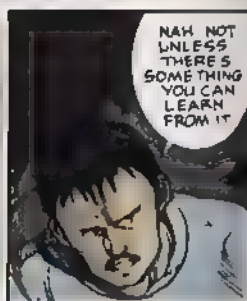


HER DENTURES WERE IN HER HAND WHEN I FOUND HER

SHE STARVED WITHOUT EVER OPENING A SINGLE CAN



THERE A MORAL TO THAT STORY?



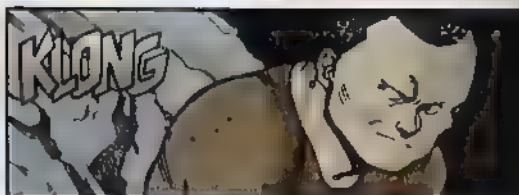
NAH NOT UNLESS THERE'S SOMETHING YOU CAN LEARN FROM IT



I GET IT YOU WANT MY THANKS FOR SAYING ME



KEEP YOUR GRATITUDE I WANT TO KNOW WHAT'S GONE ON IN THE OUT SIDE WORLD



KLONG

LAST  
WEEK

THE SOVIETS  
TOOK CONTROL  
OF NORTHERN  
JAPAN.

THERE WAS A FACEOFF  
BETWEEN THE RUSSIAN  
AND JAPANESE NAVAL  
FLEETS IN THE  
STRAITS OF TSUGARU.

A MONTH AGO THEY  
APPOINTED A PROVI-  
SIONAL GOVERNMENT,  
BUT IT'S STRICTLY  
TEMPORARY AND NOT  
SET UP TO RUN THINGS  
FOR LONG.

WHAT ABOUT  
THE AMERICANS?

THEIR FLEETS  
IN JAPANESE  
WATERS,  
TOO.

...BUT THEY'RE  
KEEPING THEIR  
DISTANCE

**BUT THEY HAVE TO  
INTERVENE! WHAT  
ABOUT OUR  
TREATY?!**

THEY  
ARE AFRAID  
OF AKIRA.

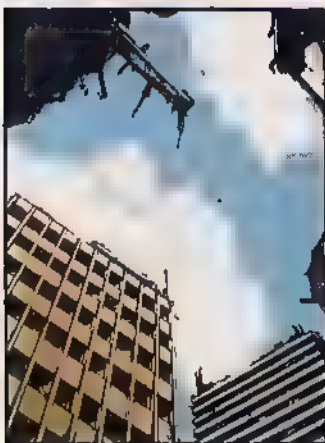
SEEMS THEY'D GATHERED  
SOME INTELLIGENCE  
ABOUT THE PROJECT,  
BUT THEY WEREN'T  
TAKING IT  
SERIOUSLY...

...TILL THEY  
SAW WHAT  
HAPPENED  
TO NEO-TOKYO.  
THEY'RE SCARED,  
AND I DON'T  
BLAME  
THEM.

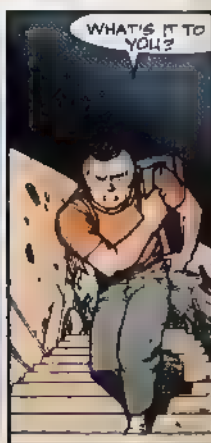
YOU MEAN...

...NEO-TOKYO  
HAS BEEN  
COMPLETELY  
ABANDONED?!

EXCEPT FOR  
AKIRA.



SO WHAT DO  
YOU PLAN TO  
DO ABOUT  
HIM?



WHAT'S IT TO  
YOU?



DON'T BE LIKE  
OUR OLD FRIEND  
THE BAG LADY

IF YOU DON'T LEARN  
TO TRUST SOMEONE,  
YOU'LL DESTROY  
YOURSELF



I USED TO BE  
PART OF A GROUP  
A LOT LIKE  
THE ONE  
YOU'RE IN.

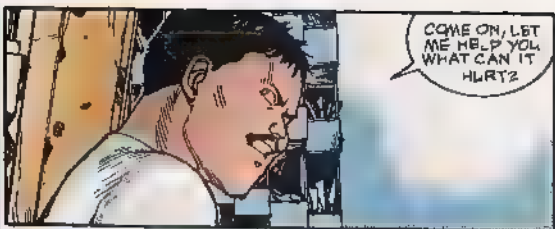
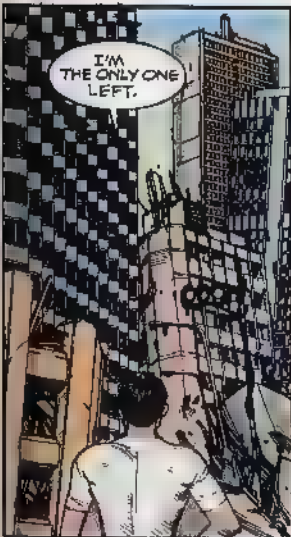
WHERE  
ARE THEY  
NOW?

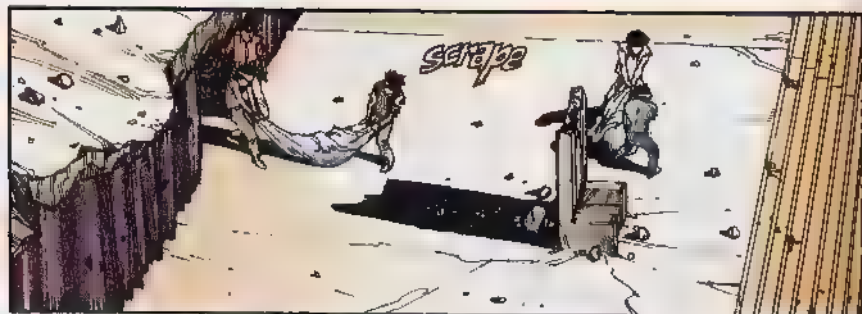


WELL, AREN'T YOU  
A SMOOTH TALKIN  
DEVIL

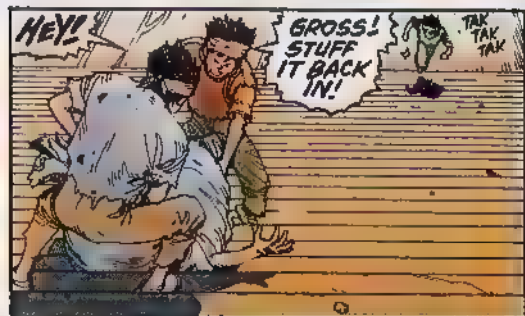
WHY  
DO  
YOU  
CARE?

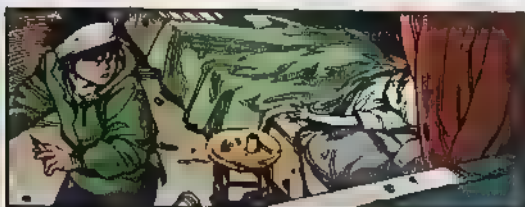
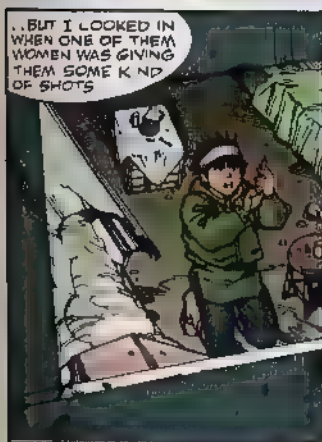
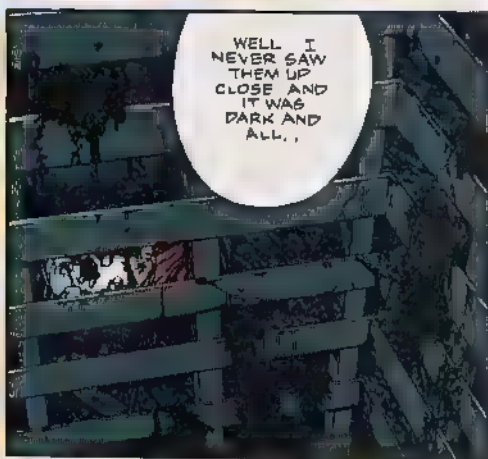
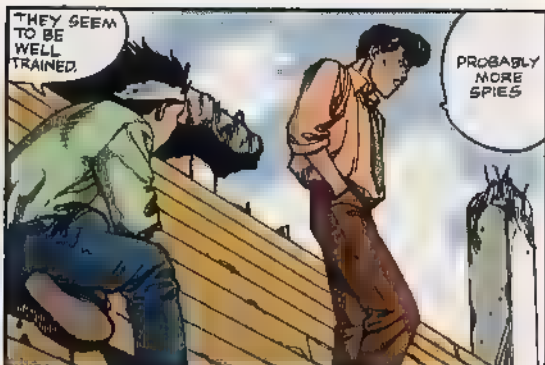




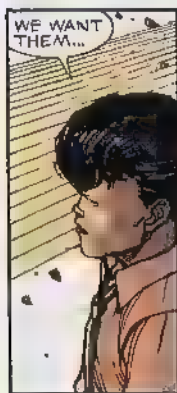
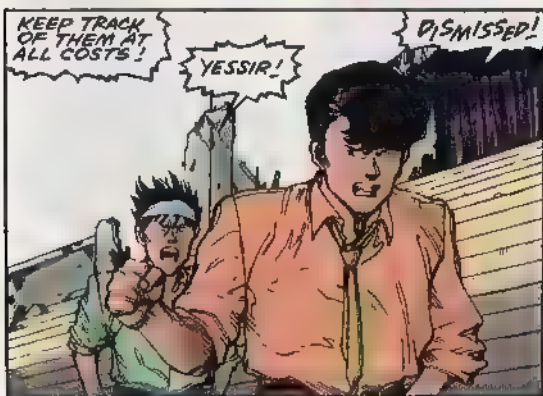
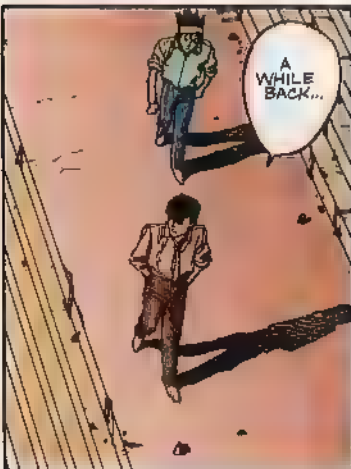


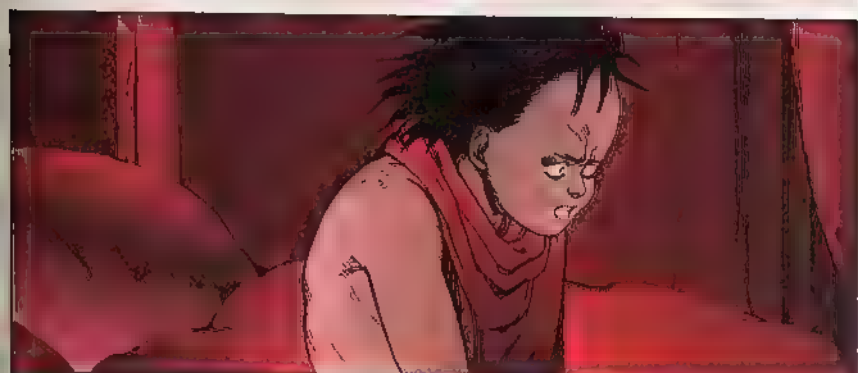
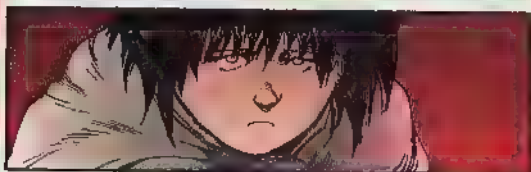
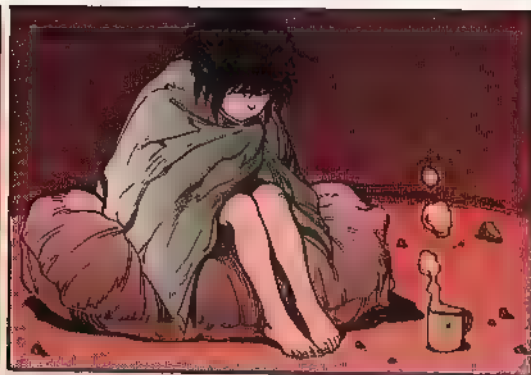
AND EVERY TIME I TRY TO TALK TO HIM, ALL HE'LL SAY IS GO AWAY

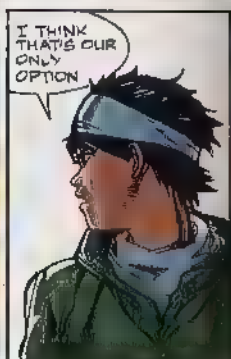
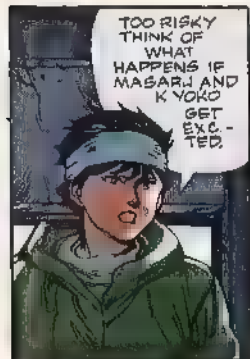
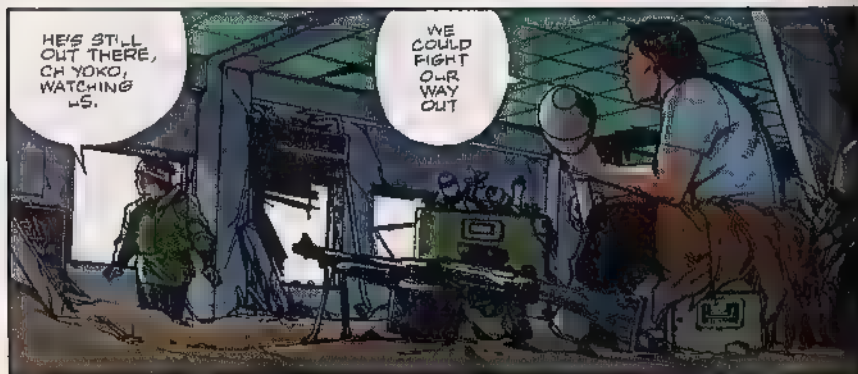
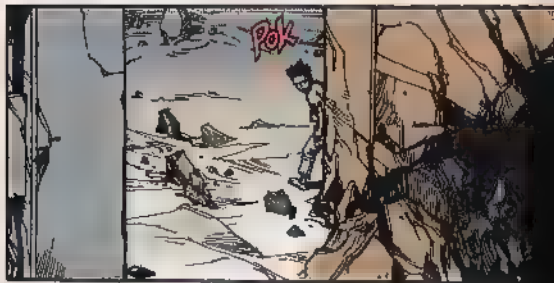














YOU JUST SAW  
THE ONE GUY  
RIGHT, KAY?

YEAH...

SOMETHING  
FEELS  
WRONG,

BUT HE'S THE  
ONLY ONE  
WE'VE SEEN.

SHALL WE WAIT FOR  
NIGHTFALL?

IF  
WE'RE  
GOING TO  
GO, THEN  
THE  
SOONER,  
THE  
BETTER.

THE  
KIDS  
SHOULD BE  
ALL  
RIGHT FOR  
A  
WHILE

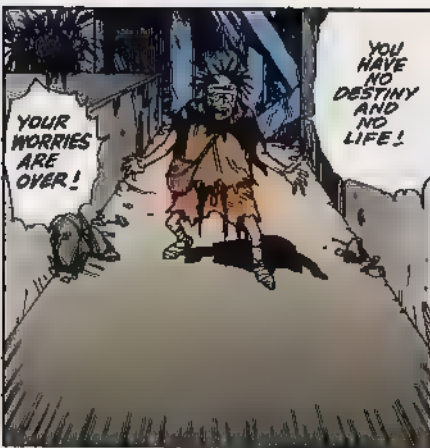
!

BUT WHAT  
ABOUT  
RYU? HOW  
WILL HE  
KNOW  
WHERE TO  
FIND US?

HE'S A GROWN  
MAN. HE CAN  
TAKE CARE OF  
HIMSELF.

F WE'RE DESTINED  
TO MEET AGAIN, WE  
WILL

YES,  
BUT...



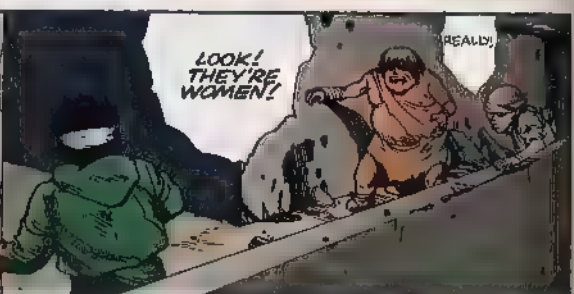
YOU  
HAVE  
NO  
DESTINY  
AND  
NO  
LIFE!



THEY  
SNEAKED  
IN!



HMF!

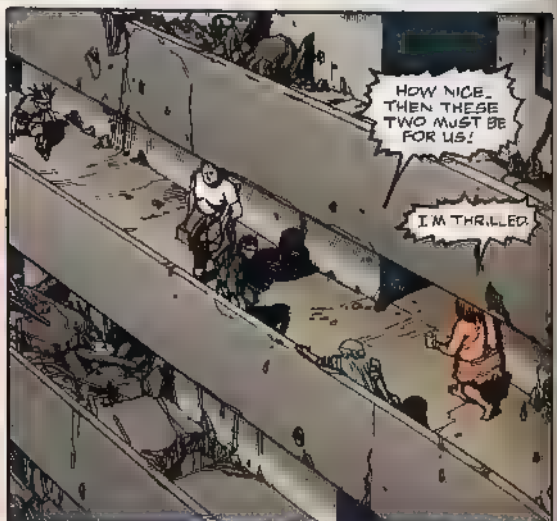


LOOK!  
THEY'RE  
WOMEN!

REALLY!



THE GREAT AKIRA HAS  
SENT US FOR THE GIFTED  
CHILDREN. HE HAS NO  
INTEREST IN THE  
WOMEN!



HOW NICE.  
THEN THESE  
TWO MUST BE  
FOR US!

I'M THRILLED.

YOU MUSTN'T DO ANYTHING TO  
UPSET THOSE KIDS OR  
STIMULATE THEIR POWERS!



KEEP  
THEM  
AWAY  
FROM  
AKIRA!

IT'S TOO LATE  
FOR ADVICE!



OUR  
FRIENDS ARE  
CARRYING  
THEM OUT  
OF HERE  
RIGHT  
NOW!



SAY  
WHAT?!



LOOKS  
LIKE..

...WE'LL HAVE  
TO FIGHT OUR WAY  
OUT AFTER ALL

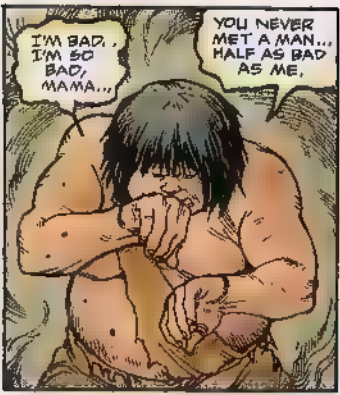
READY  
WHENEVER YOU  
ARE



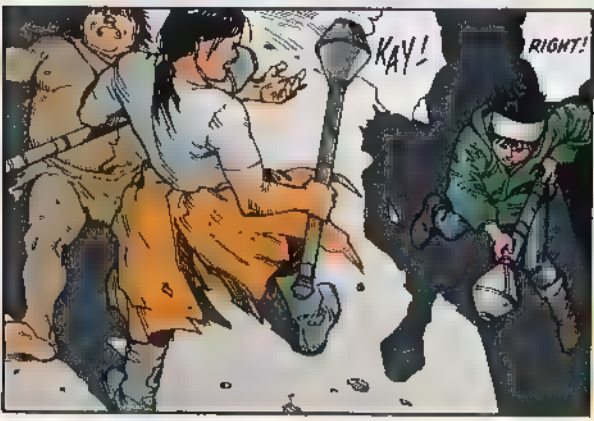
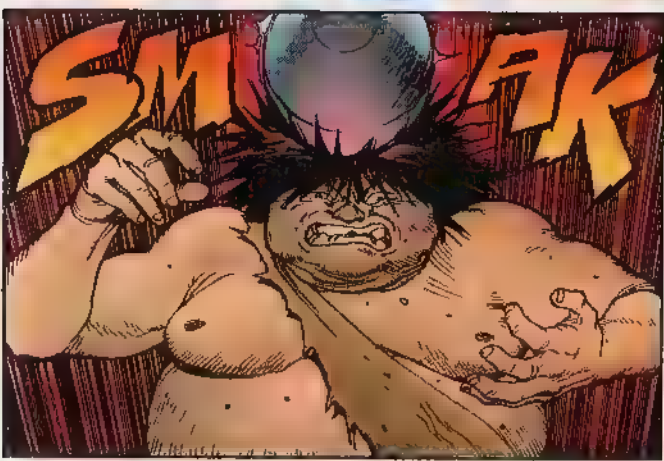
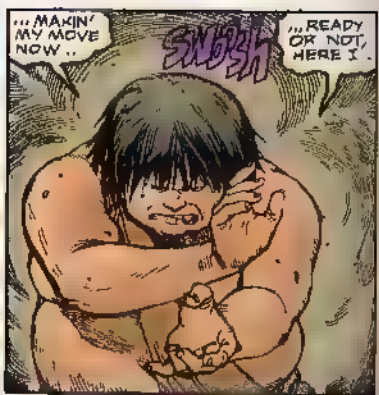
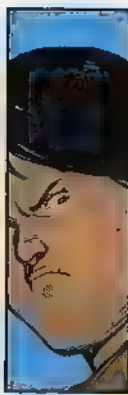
ATTACK!

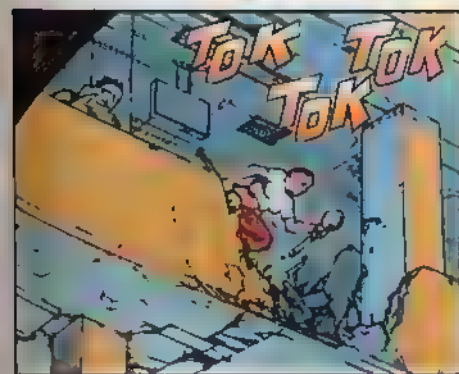
RIGHT.

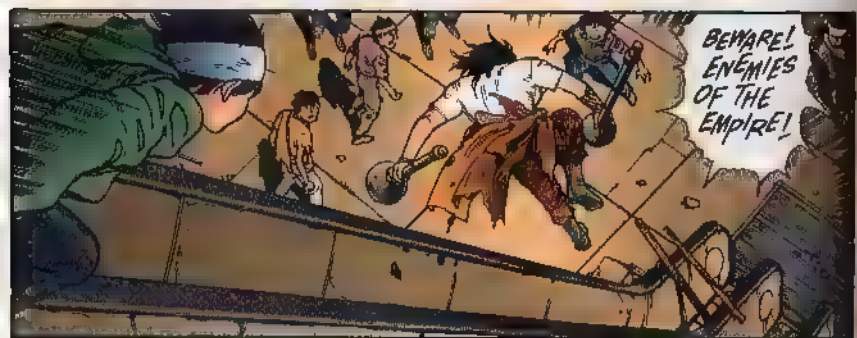
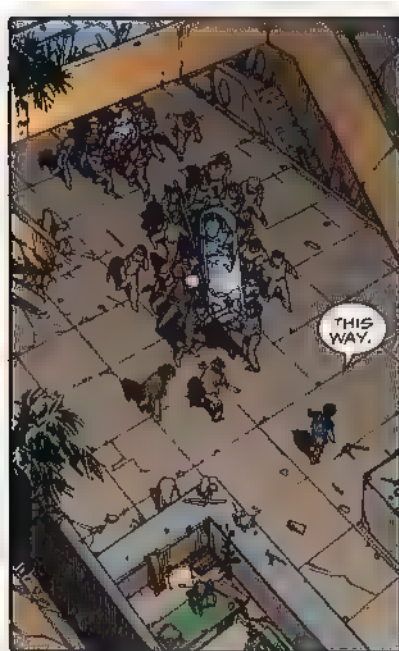




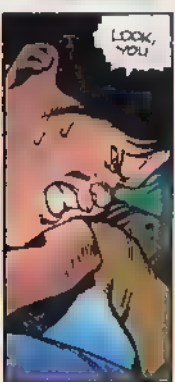
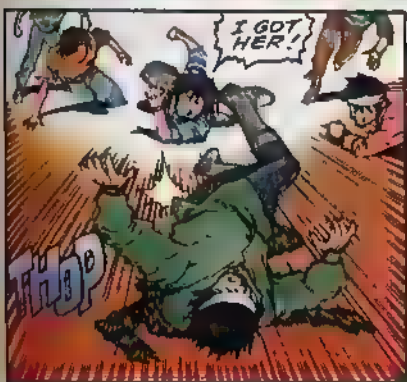
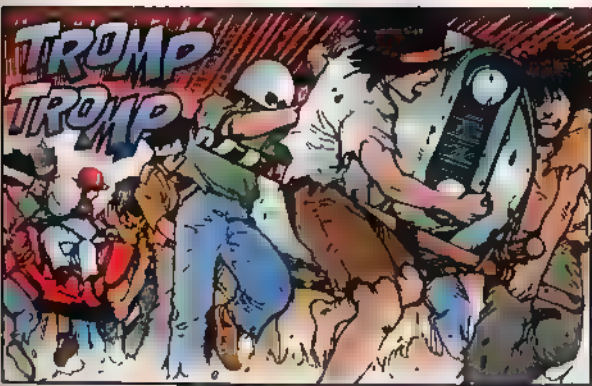
YOU NEVER MET A MAN... HALF AS BAD AS ME.

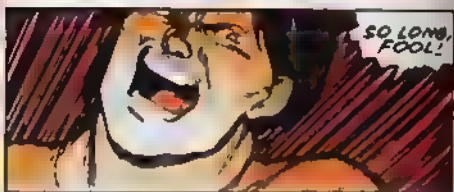


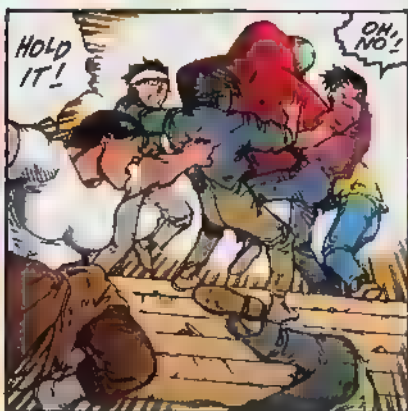
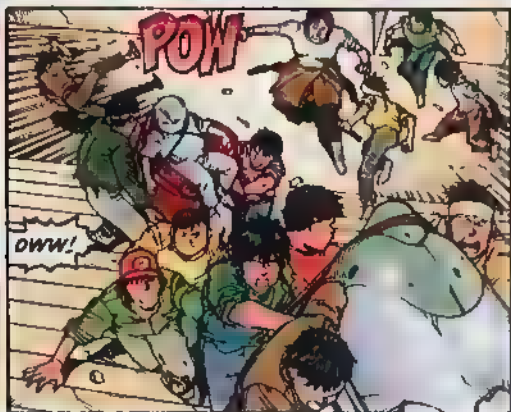
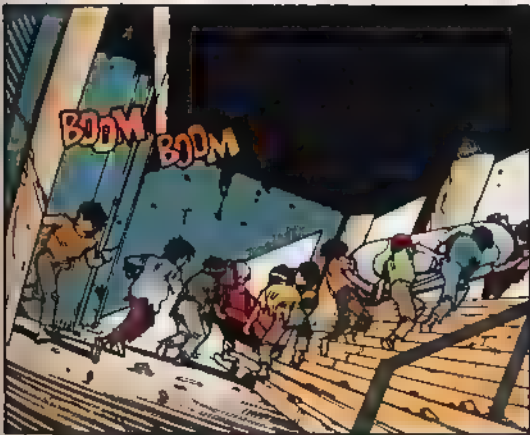




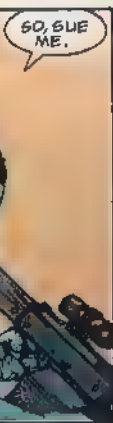
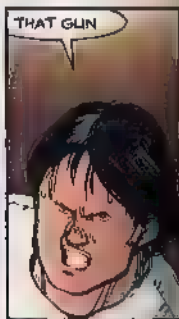
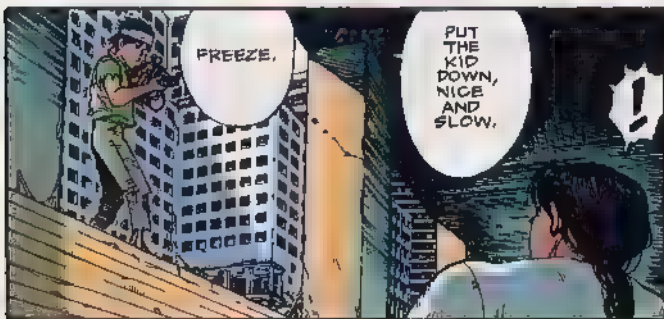
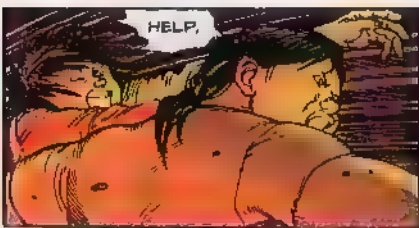


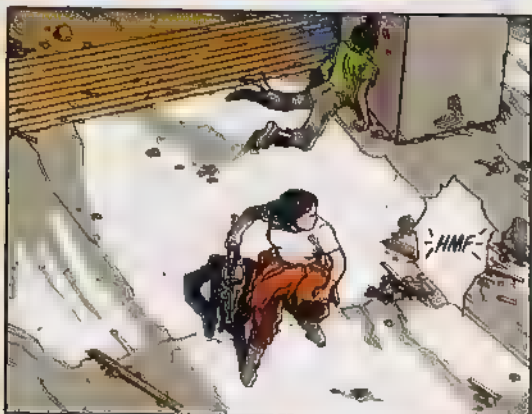
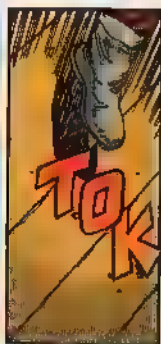


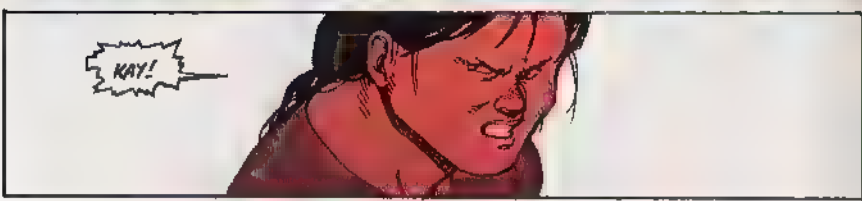
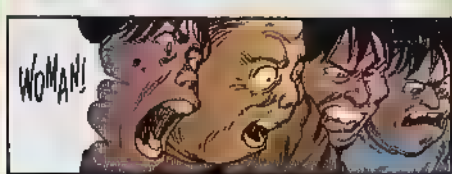




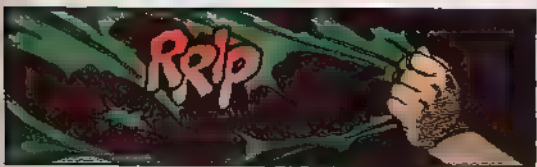


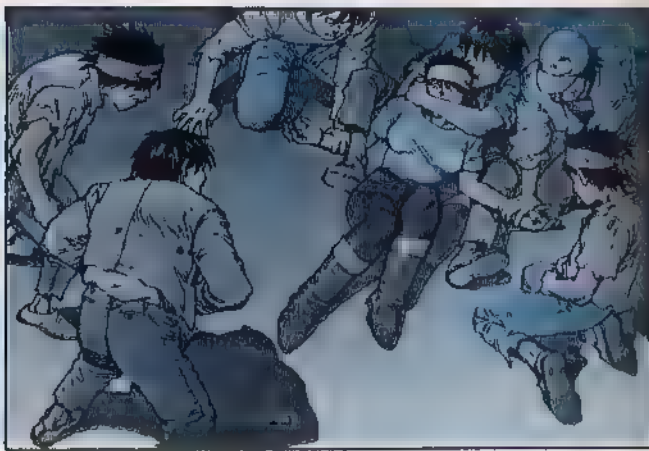
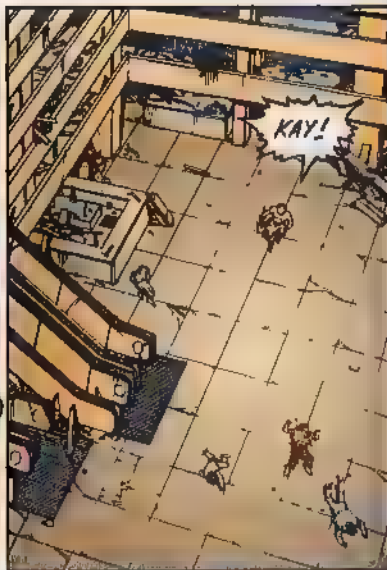


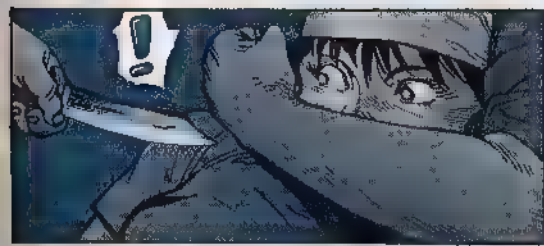
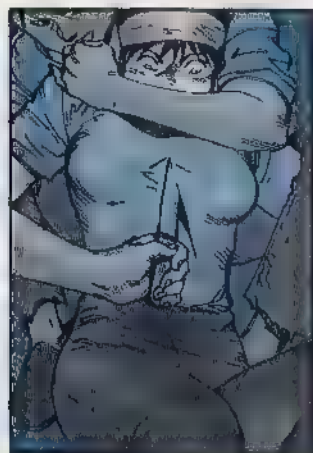
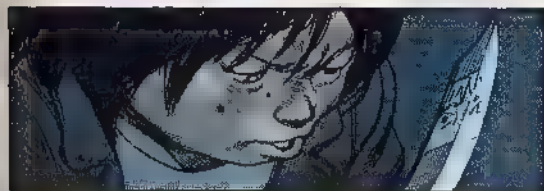
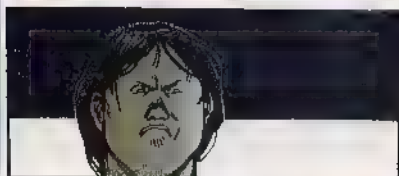
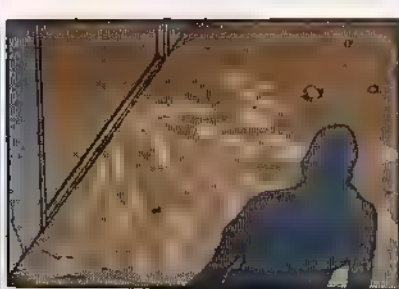




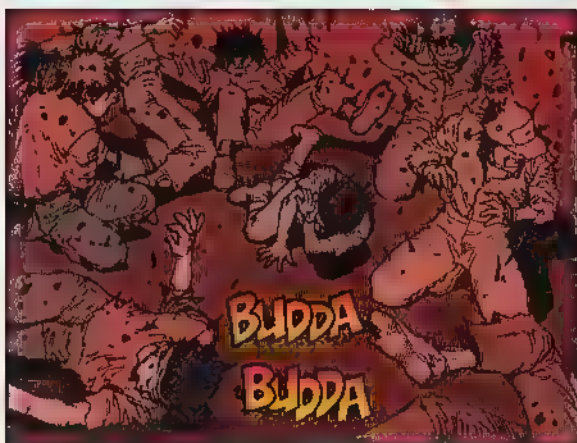
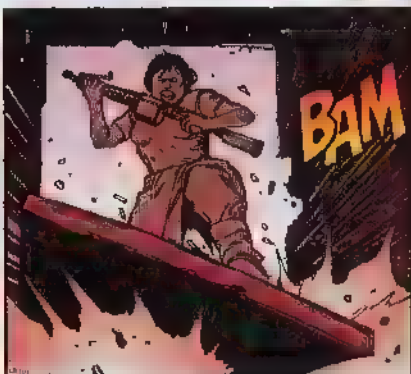
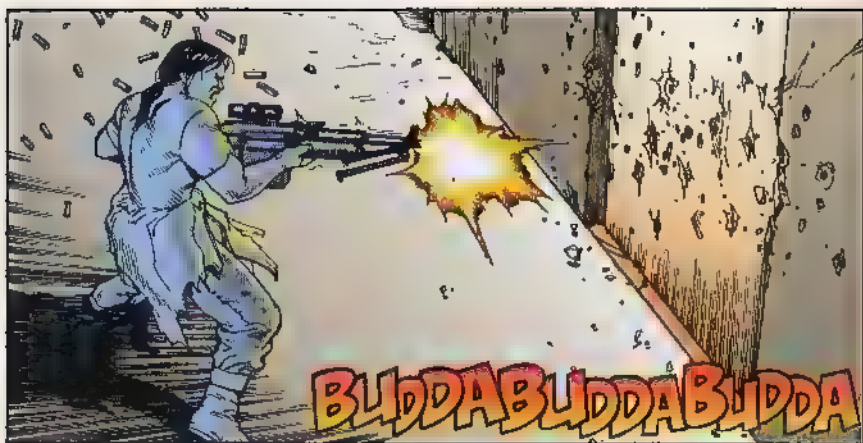






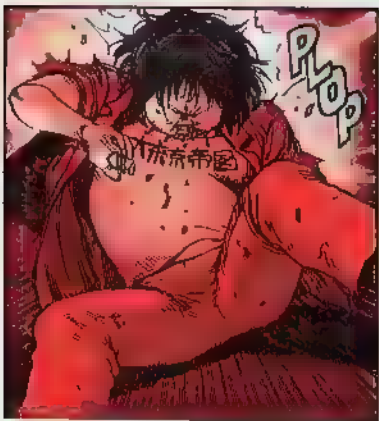
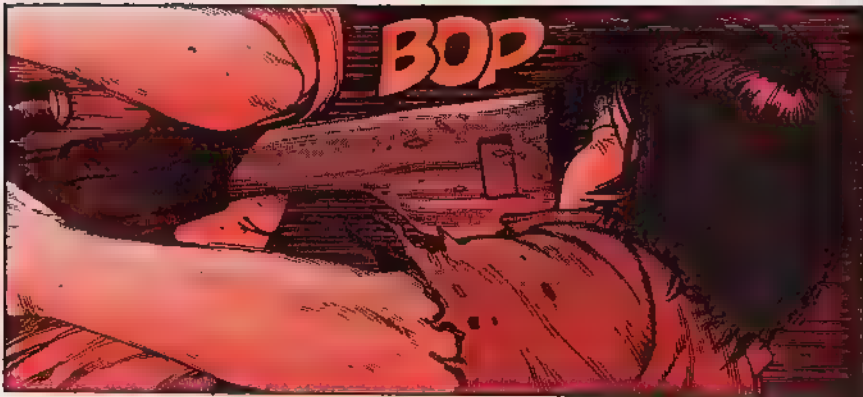






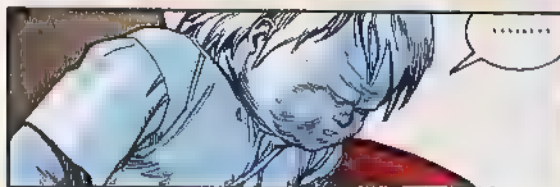
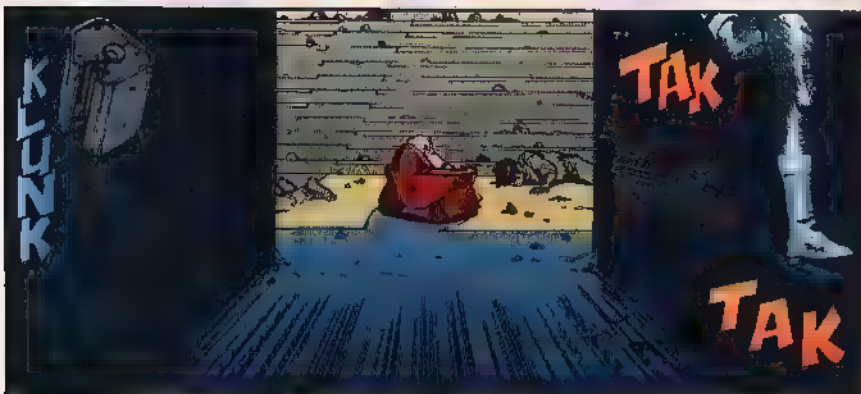
BUDDABUDDABUDDA

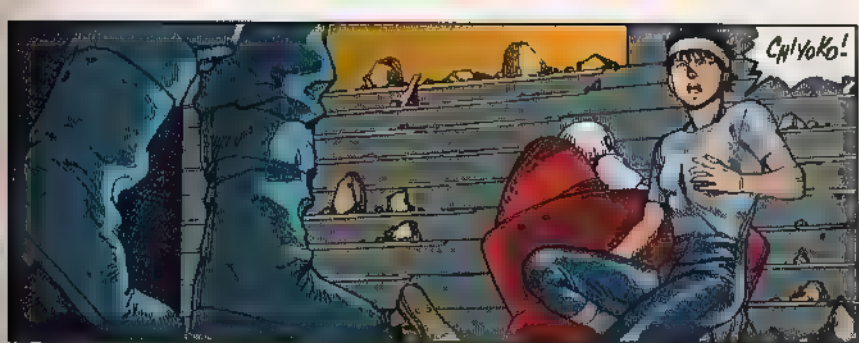




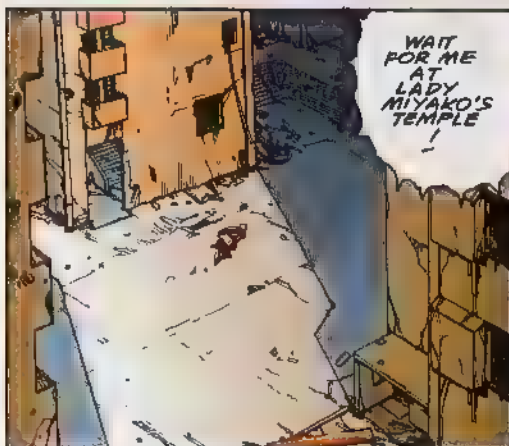
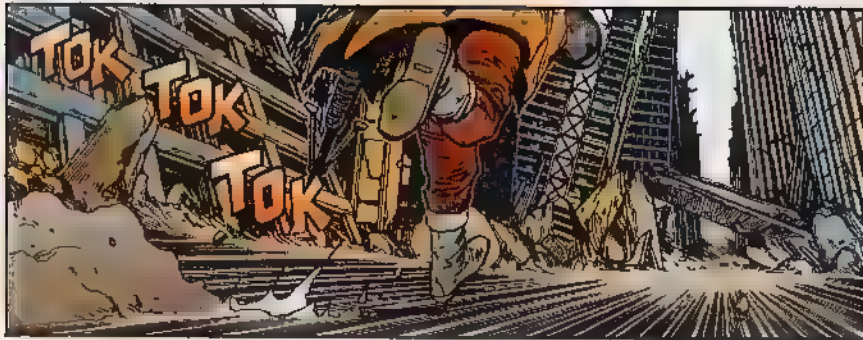


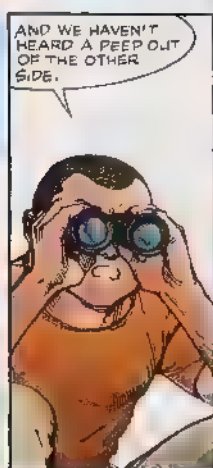
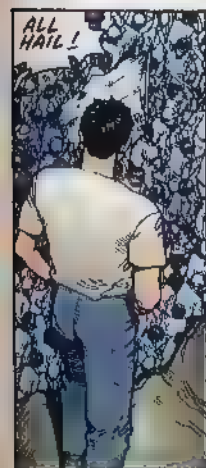
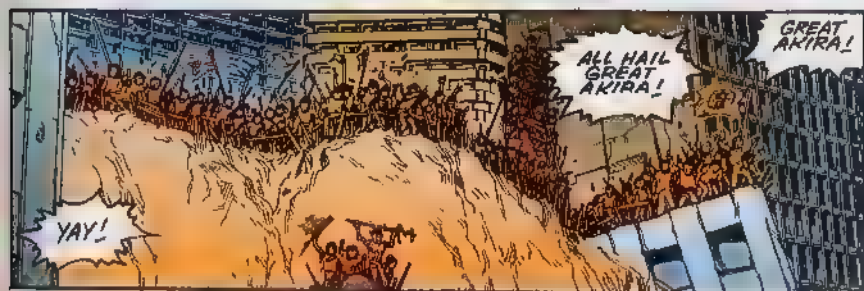
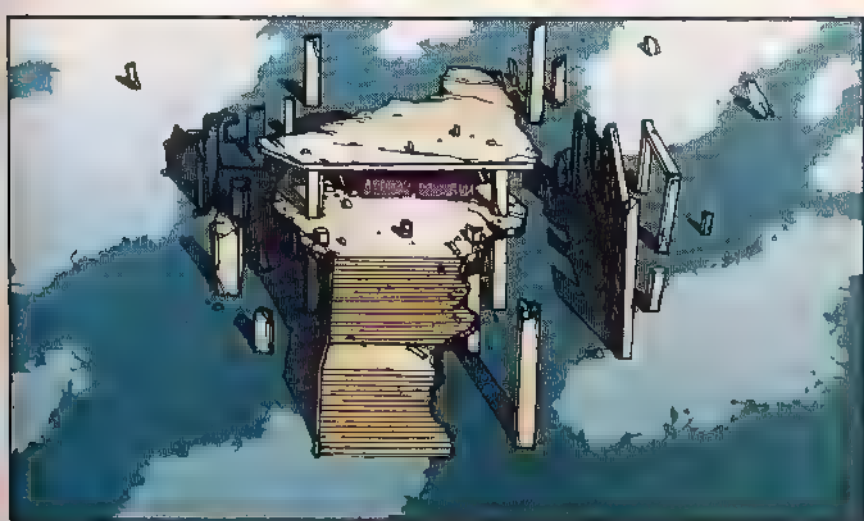


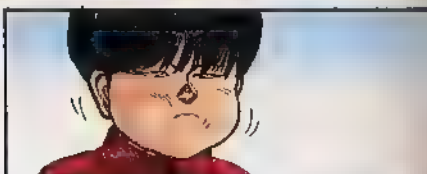
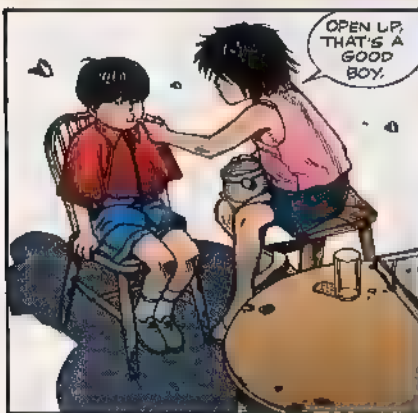
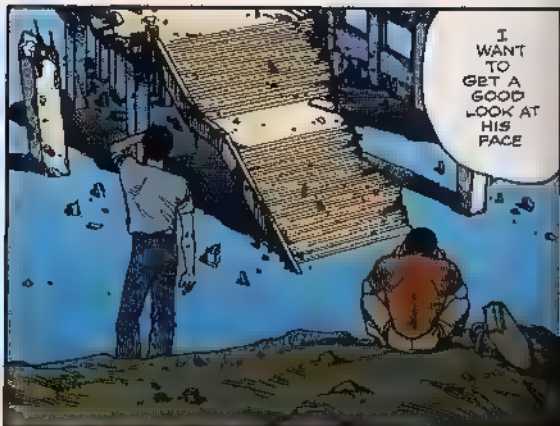




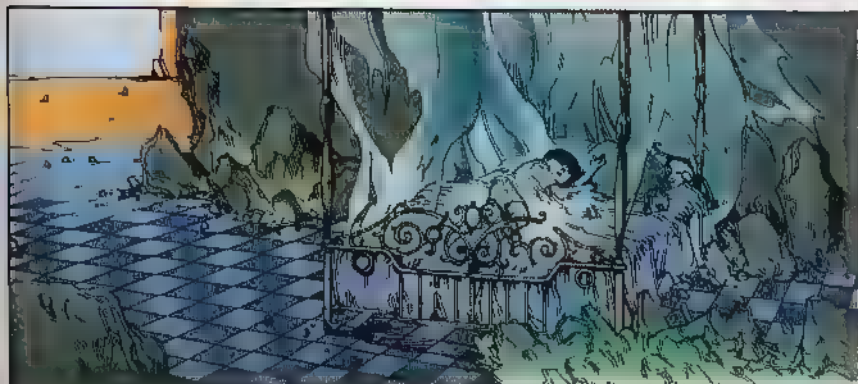
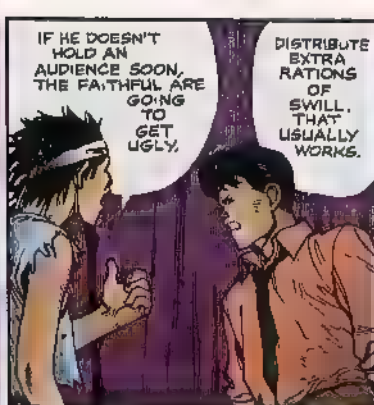


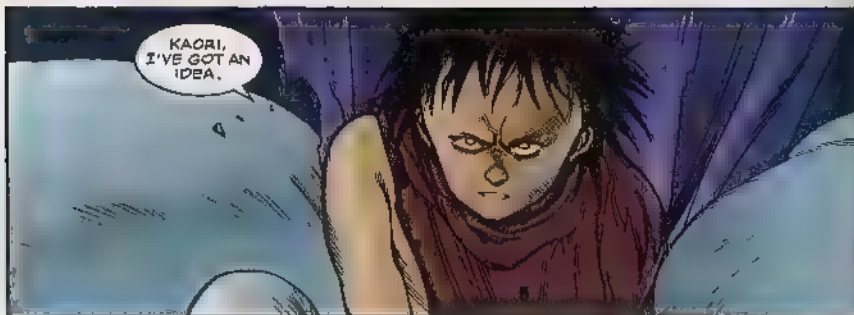
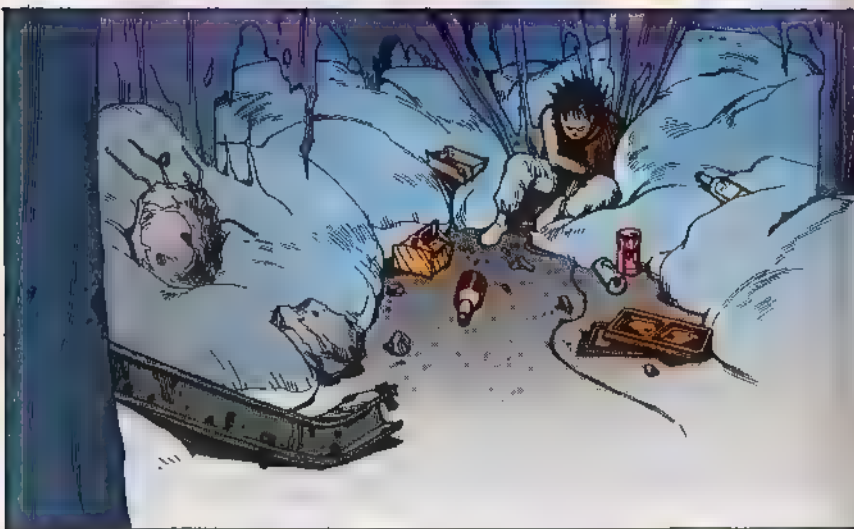
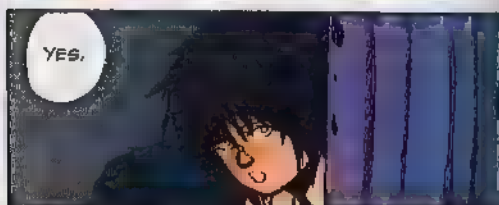
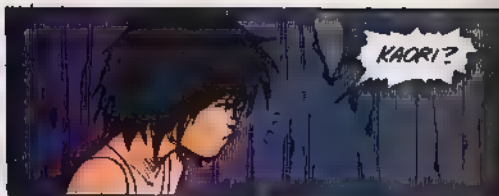


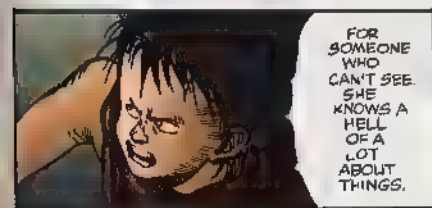
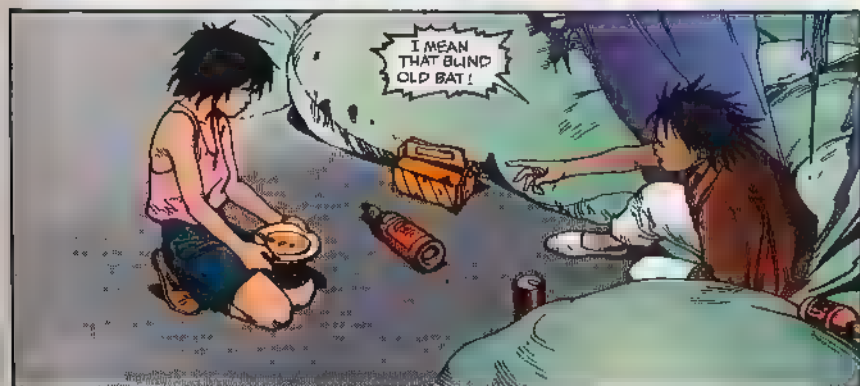
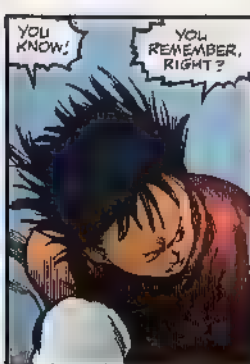


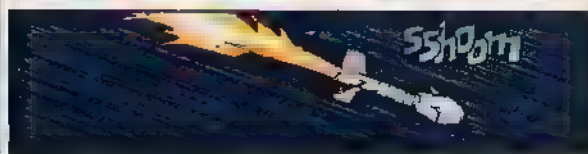
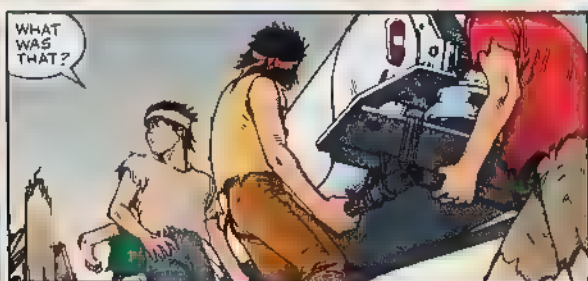
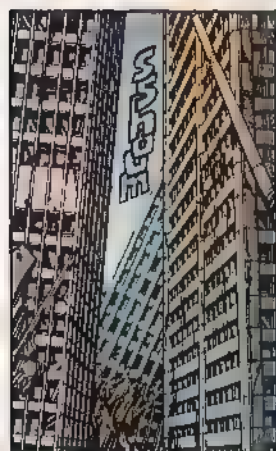




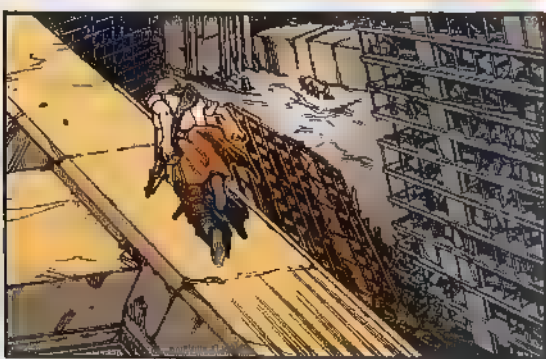
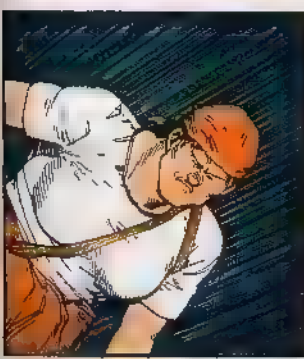
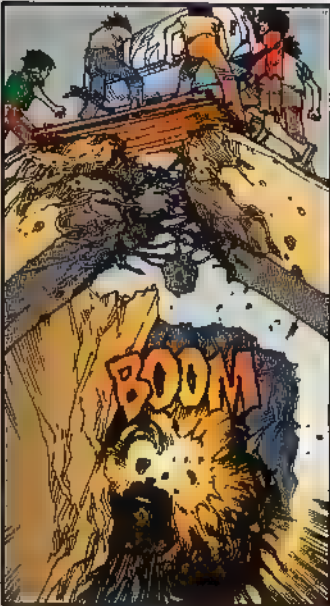


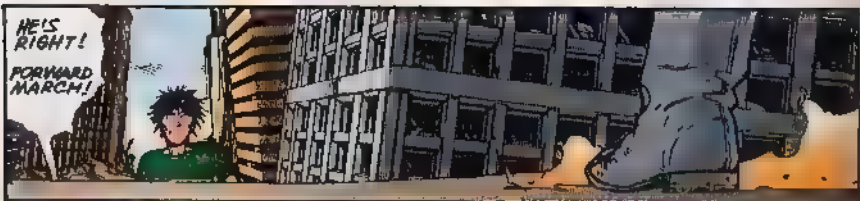
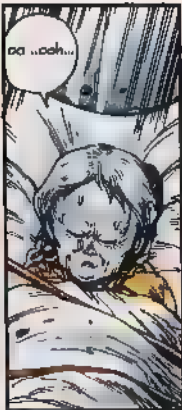


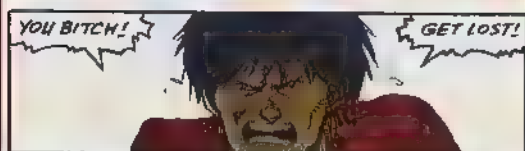
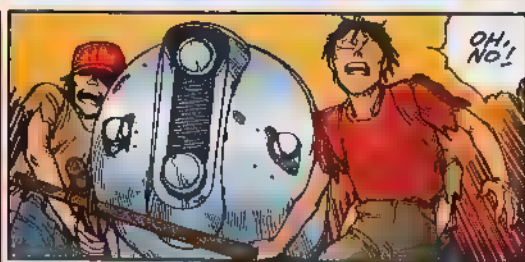
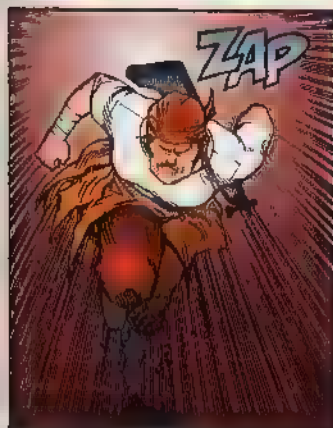
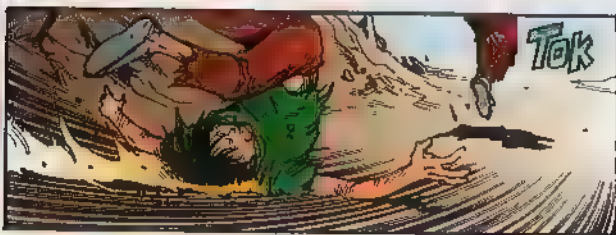
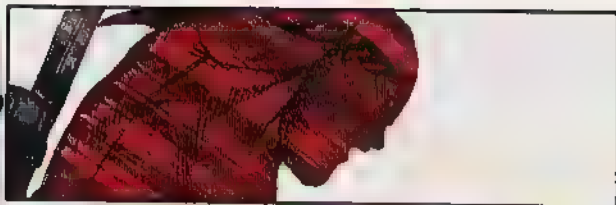




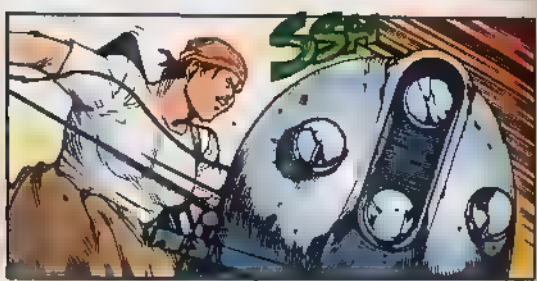
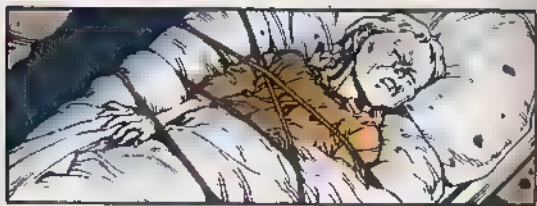
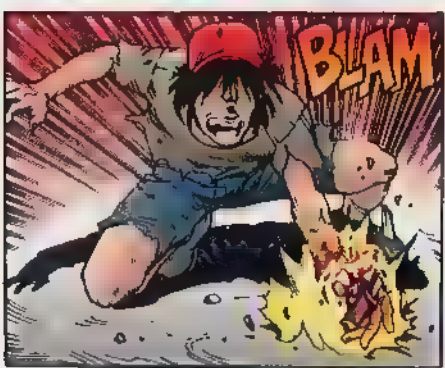
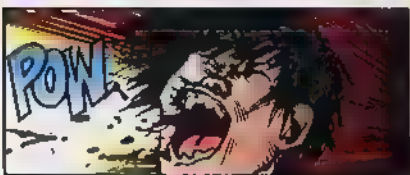










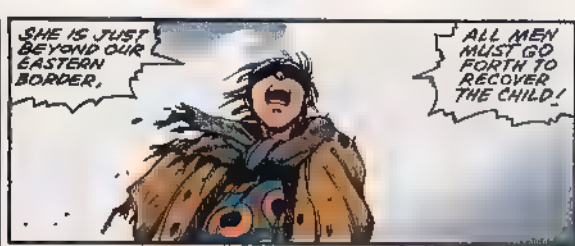






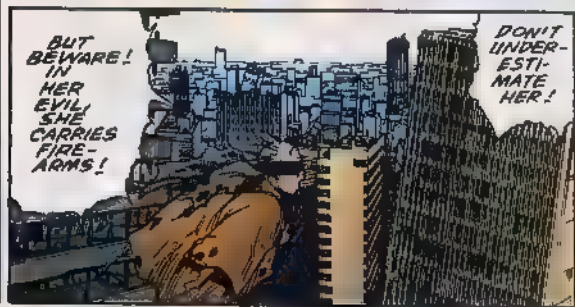
OUR BROTHERS  
HAVE BEEN  
FELLED BY A  
WOMAN OF  
THE ENEMY!

SHE HAS  
TAKEN  
THE  
CHILD!



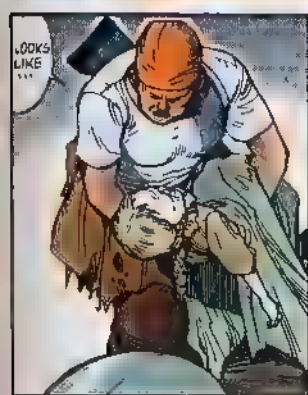
SHE IS JUST  
BEYOND OUR  
EASTERN  
BORDER,

ALL MEN  
MUST GO  
FORTH TO  
RECOVER  
THE CHILD!



BUT  
BEWARE!  
IN  
HER  
EVIL  
SHE  
CARRIES  
FIRE-  
ARMS!

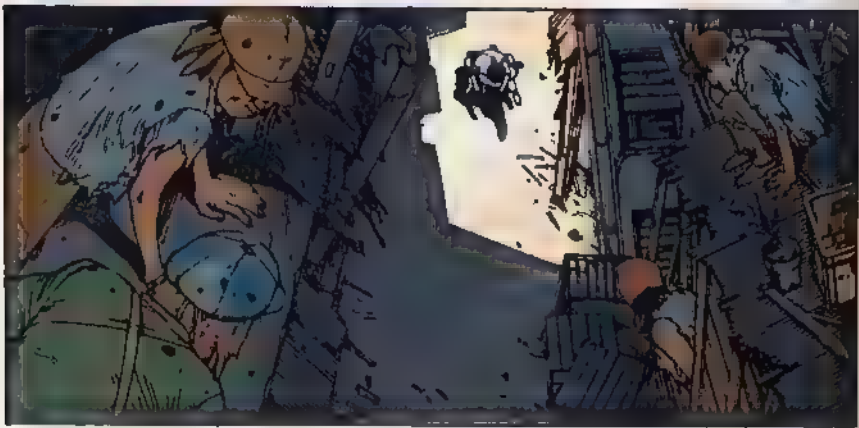
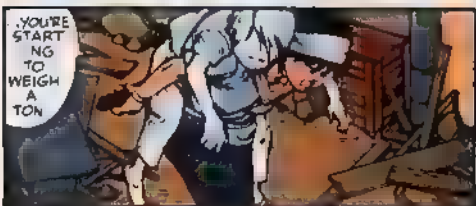
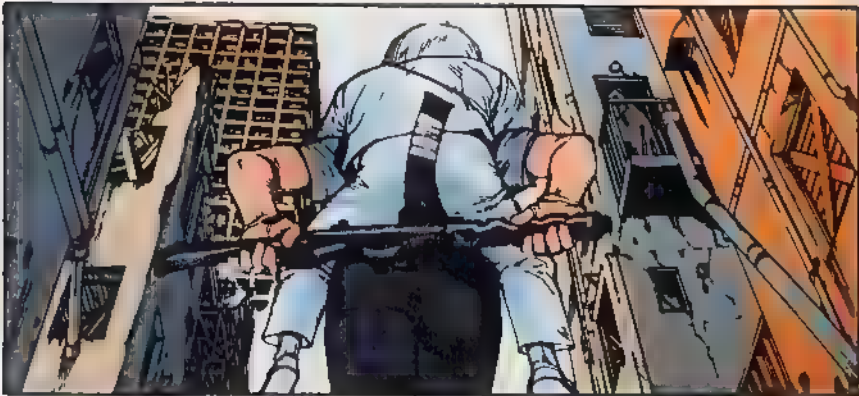
DON'T  
UNDER-  
ESTI-  
MATE  
HER!

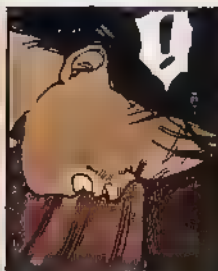
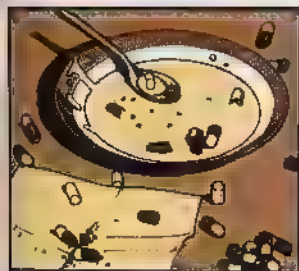


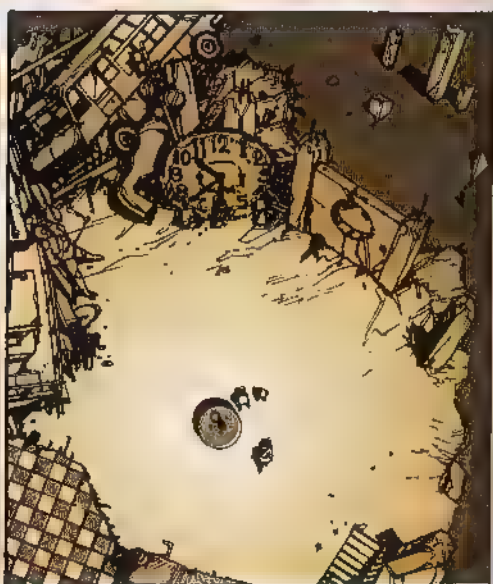
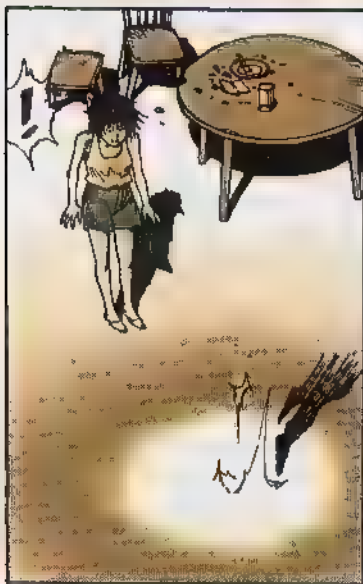
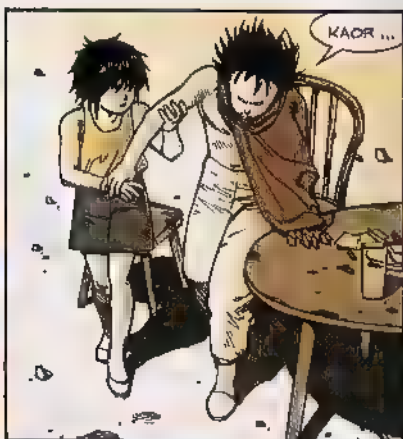
LOOKS  
LIKE



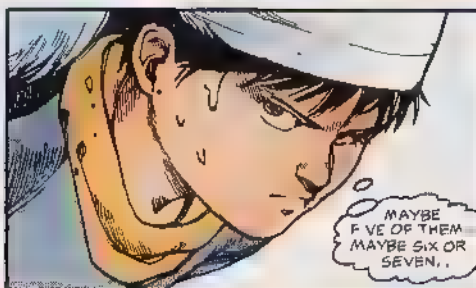
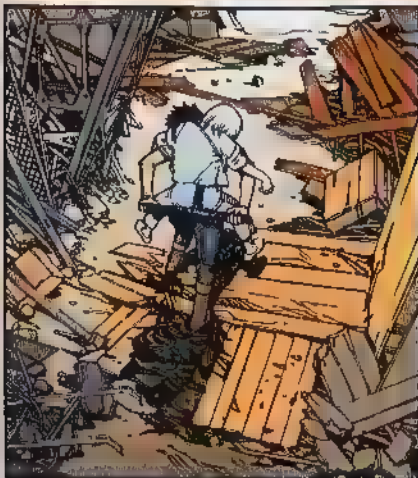
I'M  
RUN-  
NING  
OUT  
OF  
TIME

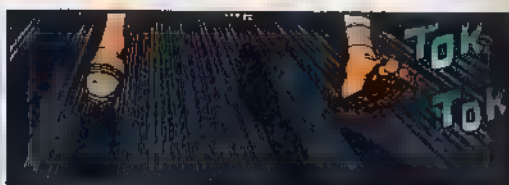
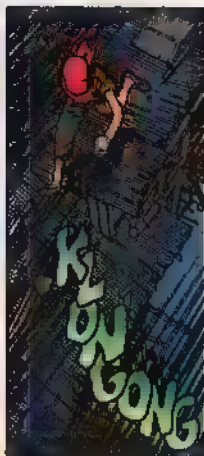
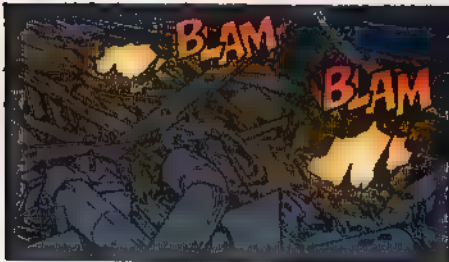


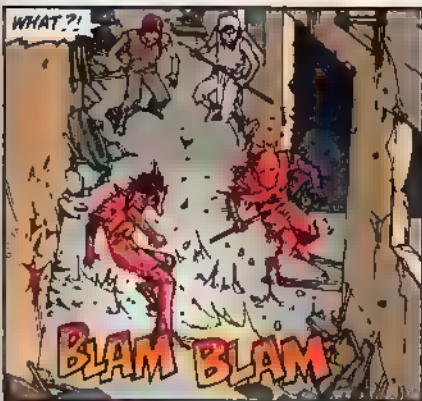
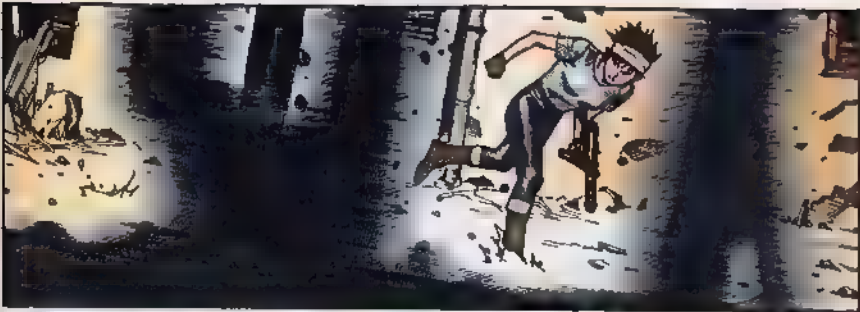


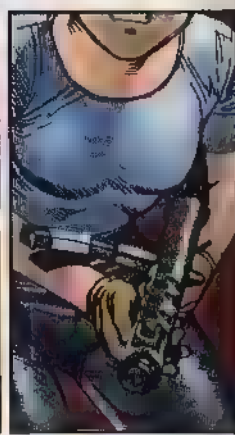
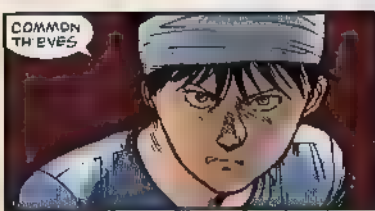
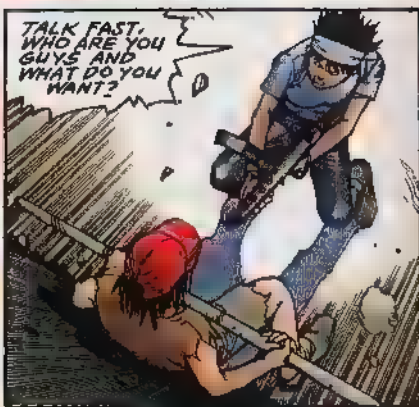
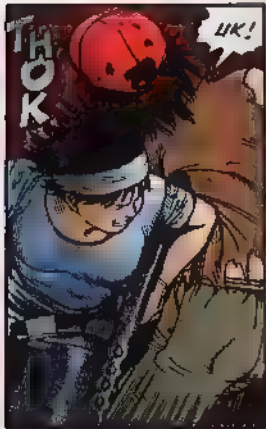












NEXT ISSUE: REVELATIONS



Neo-Tokyo is about to E • X • P • L • O • D • E



# AKIRA

Based on the Graphic Novel by KATSUHIRO OTOMO

Art Director TOSHIHARU MIZUTANI • Chief Animator TAKASHI NAKAMURA •  
Scenario IZO HASHIMOTO • Music SHOJI YAMASHIRO • Producer RYOHEI SUZUKI  
Character Design / Script / Direction KATSUHIRO OTOMO

Released by STREAMLINE PICTURES

© 1989 AKIRA COMMITTEE

**A**kira, the animated feature film based loosely on the **Akira** comic, has been playing at many repertory and art cinemas around the U.S. for the past few months. Readers who have seen the film know that although the comic and movie are similar in characterization and atmosphere, there are vast differences in the storyline. Drastic plot changes were made in order to accommodate thousands of story pages into a two hour movie. Also, the comic itself is not yet complete in Japan, leaving even **Akira's** Epic Comics staff unaware of the eventual route the ending will take.

Now, courtesy of Epic Comics, Streamline Pictures and your local comic book store, **Akira** fans who read the comic AND attend the movie, can receive a free 11x17 poster! The poster, printed in red, black and white, advertises **Akira** #16 and the second devastation of Neo-Tokyo.

Check the list below for this month's **Akira** playdates. Remember to save your ticket stub! Take this stub, along with a coupon available from your local comic book store with the purchase of an **Akira** comic, to participating comic stores and you will receive an **Akira** poster as long as supplies last.

For more information on when **Akira** will be playing near you, the Streamline Pictures "Making of Akira" videotape, or on the Streamline Pictures lobby poster shown on the previous page, write to STREAMLINE PICTURES, P.O. BOX 691418, WEST HOLLYWOOD, CA 90069.

Confirmed showings of **Akira** during the month of April are as follows:

**Salt Lake City, UT**  
**Cinema In Your Face**  
March 30—April 5

**Chicago, IL**  
**Music Box Theater**  
March 30—April 5

**Hinsdale, IL**  
**Hinsdale Theater**  
April 6—April 12

**Pittsburgh, PA**  
**Fulton Theater**  
April 6—April 15

**Honolulu, HI**  
**The Academy Theater**  
April 20—21

**Cleveland, OH**  
**The Cleveland Cinemateque**  
April 26—29

**Akira** will play in San Luis Obispo, CA during the month of May, and will play New York City during the summer.

**KATSUHIRO OTOMO**

writer/illustrator

**YASUMITSU SUETAKE**

chief assistant to Mr. Otomo

**MAKOTO SHIOSAKI**

**SATOSHI TAKABATAKE**

assistants to Mr. Otomo

**HIROSHI HIRATA**

designer • AKIRA calligraphy

**AKIRA SAITO**

designer • Kodansha edition

**Kodansha Ltd**

**YOKO UMEZAWA**

translation

**KOICHI YURI**

**HISATAKA NISHITANI**

editor • Kodansha edition

**YUKA ANDO**

editorial coordinator • Tokyo

**NORIYUKI OKAZAKI**

managing editor • New York

**Epic Comics**

**JO DUFFY**

english adaptation

**STEVE OLIFF**

with the

**OLYOPTICS COMPUTER CREW**

colorists

**MICHAEL HIGGINS**

letterer

**STEVE ALEXANDROV**

production

**MARIE JAVINS**

assistant editor

**MARGARET CLARK**

editor

**CARL POTTS**

executive editor



**H**earthroats race in Neo-Tokyo this day, staccato rhythms that shape the lives of the city. It's a rhythm of unease, when Ryu attempts an alliance with a mysterious figure who may or may not be an American spy. It's a rhythm of madness, with the malevolent forces surrounding Akira eager to extend his empire. And it's a rhythm of hope, as Chiyoko and Kay fight to make their way to the safe refuge of Lady Miyako, the lives of the children Masaru and Kiyoko hanging in the balance.

KATSUHIRO OTOMO'S

AKIRA

